(a) whether coffee export are proposed to be brought under open General Licence Schemes;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons thereon; and

(d) the steps taken to keep the price at reasonable level?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) to (d) Coffee is a freely exportable commodity subject to the provisions of the Coffee Act, 1942, which stipulates that no coffee can be exported from India without the authorisation granted by the Coffee Board. The export price realised is a function of international demand and supply. Presently, the international prices are quite remunerative for exporters and growers.

[Translation]

Export of Sugar

2707. PROF. PREM SINGH CHNDUMAJRA:

SHRI NITISH KUMAR:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have fixed any target for export of sugar during 1996-97;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority has not issued licences for the export of aforesaid fixed target of sugar;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the quantum of sugar for which export licences have been issued during 1997-98?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) to (e) A quantity of 2.50 lakh metric tonnes of free sale sugar out of 1996-97 season's production has been released by the Government for export against Registration-cum-Allocation Certificates (RCACs) to be issued by the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) for which a Trade Notice was issued by the APEDA on 17.2.97. A quantity of 94,342 Metric tonnes of sugar was allocated by the APEDA against applications received in response to this Trade Notice. Another Trade Notice was issued by the APEDA on 25.4.97 inviting applications for issue of RCAC's for the balance quantity of 1,55,658 metric tonnes. Against this, till 29.7.97, RCACs for export of 1,29,155.50 metric tonnes of sugar have been issued.

Pan Masala Producing Units

2708. SHRIMATI KAMAL RANI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether units producing pan masala are involved in tax evasion; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken by the Government to check it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government maintains a strict vigil to keep a check on tax evasion. Actions envisaged under the law are taken as and when any case of tax-evasion is detected.

Central Funds to States

2709. SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the funds allocated to North Eastern States during the current five year plan period and the State-wise details thereof;

(b) whether the funds allocated to these States are less than funds allocated to other developed states in the country; and

(c) whether the funds allocated to North Eastern Council is deducted from the funds of related States of the region?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) The Planning Commission has indicated that the Central assistance to North Eastern States during the Ninth Plan has not yet been finalised.

(b) No Sir, the per capita funds allocated to North-Eastern States during Eighth Plan were much more than the funds allocated to other developed States in the country. For the Ninth Plan period also, the Government lays great emphasis on the development of the North-Eastern Region.

(c) No Sir, the funds allocated to the North Eastern Council are not deducted from the funds of related States of the region.

[English]

Irregularities in Dena Bank

2710. SHRI MOHAN REWALE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Reserve Bank of India has conducted an investigation into alleged malpractices in the Thiruvananthapuram branch of the Dena Bank;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken against the officers of the bank found guilty?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) to (c) Dena Bank has reported that it has received certain complaints from